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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Administrative Appeals, MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

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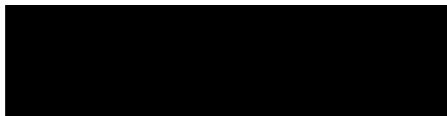
File: EAC 07 264 51730 Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER Date: **AUG 04 2010**

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:



Petition: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(L)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:



INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All of the documents related to this matter have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied by us in reaching our decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. The specific requirements for filing such a request can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. All motions must be submitted to the office that originally decided your case by filing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$585. Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires that any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

Florida Polytechnic
University of State
of Florida

July 1, 1964

DISCUSSION: The Director, Vermont Service Center, denied the petition for a nonimmigrant visa. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be summarily dismissed.

The petitioner filed this nonimmigrant petition seeking to extend the beneficiary's employment as an L-1A nonimmigrant intracompany transferee pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(L). The petitioner, a Texas corporation, states that it is engaged in marine and cargo services. It claims to be a branch office of [REDACTED], located in Nigeria. The beneficiary was previously granted L-1A status in order to open a new office in the United States and the petitioner now seeks to extend his status so that he may continue to serve in the position of president for two additional years.

The director denied the petition on August 28, 2008, concluding that the petitioner failed to establish that the beneficiary would be employed in a primarily managerial or executive capacity under the extended petition. In denying the petition, the director observed that the petitioner had failed to submit requested IRS Forms 941, Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return, evidencing payment of wages to employees in 2007. The director noted that the evidence of record showed that the company employed only the beneficiary and his spouse at the end of the first year of operations, and did not demonstrate that the petitioner had grown to the point where it required the beneficiary to perform primarily managerial or executive duties.

The petitioner subsequently filed an appeal. The director declined to treat the appeal as a motion and forwarded the appeal to the AAO for review. On appeal, the petitioner submits: (1) the U.S. company's financial statements as of September 30, 2008; and (2) copies of IRS Forms 941 for the first and second quarters of 2008.

To establish eligibility for the L-1 nonimmigrant visa classification, the petitioner must meet the criteria outlined in section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act. Specifically, a qualifying organization must have employed the beneficiary in a qualifying managerial or executive capacity, or in a specialized knowledge capacity, for one continuous year within three years preceding the beneficiary's application for admission into the United States. In addition, the beneficiary must seek to enter the United States temporarily to continue rendering his or her services to the same employer or a subsidiary or affiliate thereof in a managerial, executive, or specialized knowledge capacity.

Regulations at 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(1)(v) state, in pertinent part:

An officer to whom an appeal is taken shall summarily dismiss any appeal when the party concerned fails to identify specifically any erroneous conclusion of law or statement of fact for the appeal.

Upon review, the AAO concurs with the director's decision and affirms the denial of the petition. The petitioner has not identified an erroneous conclusion of law or statement of fact on the part of the director as a basis for the appeal. The petitioner has not submitted any statement to provide a basis for the appeal, but rather submits, without any explanation, financial statements and evidence of wages paid to its employees in

2008. The instant petition was filed on September 19, 2007 and the beneficiary's initial period in L-1A classification expired on October 2, 2007.

The petitioner must establish eligibility at the time of filing the nonimmigrant visa petition. A visa petition may not be approved at a future date after the petitioner or beneficiary becomes eligible under a new set of facts. *Matter of Michelin Tire Corp.*, 17 I&N Dec. 248 (Reg. Comm. 1978). The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(3)(v)(C) allows the "new office" operation one year within the date of approval of the petition to support an executive or managerial position. There is no provision in USCIS regulations that allows for an extension of this one-year period. As the evidence submitted on appeal reflects the petitioner's business activities and staffing levels as of 2008, it is irrelevant to a determination regarding the beneficiary's eligibility as of the date of filing and will not be considered.

Inasmuch as the petitioner has not identified specifically an erroneous conclusion of law or statement of fact as a basis for the appeal, the appeal must be summarily dismissed. 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(1)(v).

Beyond the decision of the director, the petitioner has not submitted evidence that it maintains a qualifying relationship with the beneficiary's foreign employer. To establish a "qualifying relationship" under the Act and the regulations, the petitioner must show that the beneficiary's foreign employer and the proposed U.S. employer are the same employer (i.e. one entity with "branch" offices), or related as a "parent and subsidiary" or as "affiliates." See generally section 101(a)(15)(L) of the Act; 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l).

The petitioner claims to be a "branch" of the foreign entity, [REDACTED], a Nigerian company. In defining the nonimmigrant classification, the regulations specifically provide for the temporary admission of an intracompany transferee "to the United States to be employed by a parent, *branch*, affiliate, or subsidiary of [the foreign firm, corporation, or other legal entity]." 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(1)(i) (emphasis added). The regulations define the term "branch" as "an operating division or office of the same organization housed in a different location." 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(l)(1)(ii)(J). If the petitioner submits evidence to show that it is incorporated in the United States, then that entity will not qualify as "an . . . office of the same organization housed in a different location," since that corporation is a distinct legal entity separate and apart from the foreign organization. See *Matter of M*, 8 I&N Dec. 24, 50 (BIA 1958, AG 1958); *Matter of Aphrodite Investments Limited*, 17 I&N Dec. 530 (Comm. 1980); and *Matter of Tessel*, 17 I&N Dec. 631 (Act. Assoc. Comm. 1980). If the claimed branch is incorporated in the United States, USCIS must examine the ownership and control of that corporation to determine whether it qualifies as a subsidiary or affiliate of the overseas employer.

The evidence of record shows that the petitioning company was incorporated in Texas in 2006 and therefore is not a branch office of the foreign entity. The petitioner has not provided documentary evidence of the ownership of the U.S. company. However, the AAO notes that the company's 2007 financial results were reported on the beneficiary's IRS Form 1040, Schedule C, Profit or Loss from Business (Sole Proprietorship), thus suggesting that he is the sole owner of the company. The petitioner has submitted evidence that the beneficiary owns a 49 percent interest in the foreign entity, with the remaining 51 percent of the shares are owned by [REDACTED]. Based on the minimal evidence submitted, the AAO must conclude that no parent-subsidiary or affiliate relationship has been established, as the foreign entity does not own the U.S.

company, nor is there evidence of common majority ownership interest by the same individual or group of individuals. Accordingly, the petition will be denied for this additional reason.

An application or petition that fails to comply with the technical requirements of the law may be denied by the AAO even if the Service Center does not identify all of the grounds for denial in the initial decision. *See Spencer Enterprises, Inc. v. United States*, 229 F. Supp. 2d 1025, 1043 (E.D. Cal. 2001), *aff'd*, 345 F.3d 683 (9th Cir. 2003); *see also Soltane v. DOJ*, 381 F.3d 143, 145 (3d Cir. 2004) (noting that the AAO reviews appeals on a de novo basis).

The petition will be denied for the above stated reasons, with each considered as an independent and alternative basis for denial. When the AAO denies a petition on multiple alternative grounds, a plaintiff can succeed on a challenge only if it is shown that the AAO abused its discretion with respect to all of the AAO's enumerated grounds. *See Spencer Enterprises, Inc. v. United States*, 229 F. Supp. 2d at 1043.

In visa petition proceedings, the burden of proving eligibility for the benefit sought remains entirely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. Inasmuch as the petitioner has not identified specifically an erroneous conclusion of law or statement of fact in support of the appeal, the appeal must be summarily dismissed.

ORDER: The appeal is summarily dismissed.

